*Presiding:* Lewandowski

*Attending:* **Alumni Board:** Buss, Carlson (Alumni Trustee), Cisar, Fancher, Ferris, Kaounas (student), Kern, Key, Kitslaar, Klaas, Konopacki, Lenz, Lewandowski, McHale (student), McNaughton, Nemecek (student), Petersen, Phillips, Prodoehl, Schwarzenbart (student), Spaeth, Tolan, Wade, Waldvogel-Leitner, Warmack, Woods.

**College Administration/Staff:** Anderson, Gerretsen, Hintz, Jensen (student); Johnson (Athletics); Liethen, Machacek (Admission); Messitte (President); Scanlon, Schroeder, Stephenson (Admission); Webster (Advancement); Vaubel (Career Development).

*Absent:* Meier, Ryberg, Zindar

**A. Proceedings (Friday, 4/4/14)**

Lewandowski welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with the singing of the Alma Mater at 8:05 a.m. Announcements followed.

**BOARD ACTION:** The Board approved the minutes from the Fall 2013 meeting.

Standing Committee meetings were held in the Main Dining Room and Room B12 of Pickard Commons.

Andrew Kitslaar '06 introduced the spring nominations memo on behalf of the Governance Committee.

**BOARD ACTION:** The Board approved two Alumni Association Senior Award recipients to be honored at the Awards Convocation on April 23rd:

**BOARD ACTION:** The Board approved the nominee list for Alumni Trustee and Alumni Board members.

Gregg Petersen ‘78 and Wayne Webster gave an update on the Bookstore. The Bookstore reports to Advancement as of June 2013. They have had some recent frustrations including turnovers in the management. However, Webster and Executive Director of Marketing and Communications, Melissa Anderson ‘02, have had very productive meetings with the current Bookstore manager and the national manager of Follett. Within the next few months there will be the following updates:

* More online presence (custom-made options)
* More athletic options (i.e.: UnderArmour, Nike, etc.)
* More women’s apparel options

Anderson is working with Follett in regards to trademarking and licensing- we just applied for trademarking. The vendors will now send us samples for approval before items are stocked in the bookstore. The Follett Senior VP was very receptive and gave us examples of other school websites. They have started a quarterly Bookstore Advisory Committee which consists of faculty, staff, students, and athletics. Amy Gerretsen ‘04 will represent alumni input and can share information via class letters and e-newsletters.

Mara Jensen ‘14, chair of the Senior Class Gift committee, updated the Board. They have currently raised $1,647.23 and have 56 % class participation. They raised $762 at the VIP party and had 63% of the class attend the event. In the next couple of weeks they will be communicating through social media and will plan on sending out an appeal letter from a parent. Michelle Buss spoke on behalf of the Advancement Committee and that per the fall meeting the Board will participate in a match after 70% participation is meet. The Advancement Committee will review that decision after the results from the Cap & Gown Party.

Gerretsen reviewed the Commencement schedule. The Commencement theme is "The New Media" and features two honorary degree recipients, David Plotz and Hanna Rosin. Trustee Doreen Chemerow ‘73 will receive the Medal of Merit. The senior speakers will be Sophia Kaounas (Commencement) and Casey Gott (Baccalaureate). The Board of Trustees is meeting the same weekend as Commencement and the Trustees will march in the processional. Gerretsen also shared the combined Family Weekend and Homecoming schedule (September 26-27). Numerous activities for students, families, alumni, faculty and staff are being coordinated by a campus-wide committee. The Alumni Board and the Parents’ Advisory Committee will be meeting together, and another Alumni Career Day may also be held.

Amanda Liethen '07 shared the Annual Fund reports. The Annual Fund is ahead of last year, but there is still a long way to go before June 30. Alumni donations for unrestricted and restricted funds are up and the number of donors is up from last year, as well, but the participation trend is still down from 3-4 years ago. The Alumni Board is at 85% giving.

Lori Schroeder '13 gave an update on the Phonathon and Tuition Free Forward Day. There were 28 student callers for the spring Phonathon and they have raised $148,702 to date. They have had more calling shifts this semester and it has gone more smoothly with the automatic dialing/computer system. Pledges are up by 5% and 67% of donors have been contacted. Schroeder also gave an update on the 3nd annual Tuition Free Forward Day (TFF). TFF is a celebration, and also an educational event, designed to make students aware of the fact that gifts to the College help keep their education affordable. Gift tag signs went up a week before the events and she organized a scavenger hunt. TFF was heavily marketed to students on Facebook and Twitter. There were two events- a thank you writing lunch where 319 letters were written (an increase from last year). An event was held at Roadhouse again on Thursday evening. They still had about 300 students attend and had students write multiple notes. She thought that the students were remembering TFF day and connecting to it. She also sent emails to the Class of 2012 and 2013 to remind them about TFF, as well as to remind them to make their gifts.

Eliza Stephenson ‘09, Assistant Director of Admission, gave an update on behalf of the Admission Office. Stephenson is in charge of the volunteer team. Their goal is to have faculty, current students, parents and alumni involved as Admission volunteers. Sam Van Zeeland works with the parents and the Parents’ Advisory Committee. Currently, they have 15 parent-to-parent call volunteers and 95 calls have been completed or had a note sent after leaving a voicemail. Stephenson works with alumni volunteers, and is increasing volunteers over a large geographic area. The goal is to have alumni attend college fairs to meet with prospective students. They also had ten alumni write professional letters that were sent to over 800 accepted students. They are currently in the financial aid/campus visit time and are working on organizing summer send-offs in the “backyard” area (Fox Valley, Milwaukee, Madison, Chicago, Twin Cities). The goal is to have an admission volunteer chairperson in each geographic area within the next two years.

Jenn Machacek, the Vice President of Enrollment in Admission, also gave an update regarding current strategy and implementing programs to get Ripon’s “backyard” back. The numbers of acceptances is up, and the goal is to get 255 first years and 10 transfers for fall. They have had 1461 applications (goal is 1500 and last year it was 1282). They are slightly down in deposits (deadline is May 1st), currently about 10-15 deposits. They are currently up in transfers and international students. They are down in Minneapolis area students and are increasing numbers within the Chicago area. Machacek shared that it would take about 2-3 years to build back relationships with the “backyard” areas, so recruiters will stay in the same areas to build relationships. Two recruiters will be visiting the mid-Atlantic area’s top private schools next year. Areas of need include: recruiter for the west and south national fairs, and more time in the St. Louis, Denver, Michigan/Grand Rapids markets. They are improving their department by hiring a new Admission/Financial Aid staff member, and working with Marketing and Communications on new branding and marketing pieces. They are also inviting school counselors and prospective students to select alumni events.

Julie Johnson, the Athletic Director, gave an update on the athletic department. The NCAA Division III has just recently allowed coaches to do off campus recruiting and to visit high schools. They have 25 dates to do home visits, high school and practice visits. They have two athletic trainers now but they are still behind compared to other schools. They are working with development on the facility needs which will eventually help with Admission and recruitment. They want to go public with the Storzer campaign within the next 6 months. Johnson and a couple of her coaches are currently working with Gerretsen on Homecoming/Family Weekend events, as well as the Red Hawks Golf Scramble. She is also working with David Wm. Scott on providing a “Leadership/Athletics-Life Event” for current student athletes. She has also applied for the NCAA internship/grant and is still waiting to hear. We have helped alumni athletes make more connections by recently organizing Friends of Athletics events every fall and spring semester.

The Board adjourned at 12 p.m. to lunch.

President Zach Messitte went over the Strategic Planning Process and the State of the College.

**Admission-** The goal is 1500 applicants, predicting that Ripon will admit 1000-1150 resulting in a class of 265 students. Tuition and room/board are at the second lowest rate in the ACM, which causes concern for the net tuition revenue. 37% of students are from out of state this year and the ACT scores remain steady. Strides have been made to help increase campus diversity including hiring an assistant director of multicultural recruitment and program development, and a bilingual admissions counselor.

**Fundraising-** In August it was announced that the Imagine Tomorrow campaign was at $40 million and the Board of Trustees has now extended the campaign goal to $60 million with the same timeline (completion date of June 2015). The focus of the campaign is increasing the endowment, since building the endowment is very critical to creating and funding additional programming, professorships, and scholarships.

**Student Life-** Per national survey student satisfaction rating, Ripon College is in a good place. Student retention is at 86% and the 4 year graduation rate is high. In regards to academic affairs, the student/faculty ratio is 12:1. The total number of students is at 900. As student numbers grow, we will need to hire more faculty members. President Messitte did note that is has been difficult to retain faculty/staff/students of different ethnicities. Salaries are currently low for faculty and staff, and as admission numbers grow, the salaries will need to increase.

**Other items include:**

1. Speakers for “The Center of the Politics and The People” coming to visit our campus this semester include: U.S. Senator Ron Johnson; Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett; Republican Governors Association Communications Director, Gail Gitcho '01; and Regional Press Secretary for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, Brandon Lorenz '02.

2. President Messitte will be team teaching with Diane Mockridge, Professor of History, for an In Focus course, ‘Old Italy, New Italy’. They will be spending one week on campus before spending 2 ½ in Rome.

3. The 2014 Commencement theme is “The New Media,” which will explore the transformation of how we communicate and share information in the age of digital technology. Husband and wife, David Plotz and Hanna Rosin, both with the online magazine, *Slate,* will deliver a joint Commencement address. A panel discussion on the topic of new media will take place from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, May 18 and

feature Plotz, Rosin and Mark Porubcansky '77, foreign editor of *The Los Angeles Times* newspaper.

**Advancement & Imagine Tomorrow Campaign Report (Webster):**

Webster went over the original campaign objectives:

* Raise 50 million by June 2015.
* Engage a broader segment of our alumni, parent and friend population in a meaningful way.
* Prepare Ripon College to enter into another campaign.

Impact of the campaign to date include:

* Three new endowed faculty positions: Pieper chair in servant leadership, Chemerow chair in theatre, and Oyster chair in chemistry.
* 30 new endowed scholarships have been created and many more supplemented.
* 9 other endowed funds were created for faculty development and student research, and also a fund to support the new Career Discovery Tour.
* 19 new temporary restricted funds for outright use and the Mellon Foundation Grant for faculty bridge program.
* New equipment has been funded and renovation of the weight room and pool in Storzer. The sprinkler systems on competition and practice fields were installed.
* Renovation of the Dahm Heritage Room, Pickard Dining Room and the Mihaly Room were completed.
* There were also cosmetic upgrades to the Lane Library and West Hall Museum.

Currently have a one million dollar lead commitment towards the athletics and wellness center, of which $200,000 has been received.The level of engagement is increasing with our on and off campus events. The social media outreach is also improving and growing. The Imagine Tomorrow final goal has been changed to $60 million over a five year period: $44 million in endowment for student and faculty support, $11 million in unrestricted support, and $5 million in support of capital needs and planning for future bridge campaign.

Kitslaar and Petersen gave a Governance Committee update and passed out a meeting survey for the members to fill out.

The Board adjourned at 2:15 p.m. for Committee meetings in the Main Dining Room of Pickard Commons.

A faculty & staff career networking event with the Alumni Board was held at 4:30 p.m. in the Heritage Room in the Commons, followed by the 2014 Cap & Gown Party in Great Hall.

**B. Proceedings (Saturday, 4/5/14)**

Kitslaar presided over the Saturday meeting.

Standing Committee meetings continued over breakfast in the Main Dining Room.

Julie Carlson ‘76 gave a brief Trustee report. At the February meeting, Trustees approved raising the tuition fee up by 5.3% (room & board is not increased), and the campaign goal to $60 million . They are currently discussing strategic imperatives- what’s our main initiative/focus/specialty going to be?

**C. Standing Committee Reports**

**(NOTE:** Full minutes/meeting notes from all committees are attached.**)**

Michelle Buss '95 **(Advancement Committee)**

* Career Discovery Tour fundraising update.
* The Senior Class Gift reached 70% at the Cap & Gown Party last night.
* If seniors give $50- it will get them in the 1851 Club and they will be invited to the 1851 Club Reception during Alumni Weekend.

Kathy Wade '88 **(Ripon Person Committee)**

* ROI panel theme- next year's theme is "Legacy"- the goal is to find a panel of alums and parents and have a moderator supervise the panel.
* First annual Alumni Career Day (4/3) update and plans for the future.
* The Career Discovery Tour Fall ’14 will be in Chicago, Sunday through Thursday during Fall Break. There will be approximately 8 scheduled visits and the goal is to have 12-16 students attend.

Gregg Petersen ‘78 **(Governance Committee)**

**D. General Discussion/New Business/Old Business**

No further old business was discussed.

New Business-

* Joe Tolan ‘81 shared an interesting alumni connections idea were alumni offer a place to stay in their home to other alumni and students. It would be up to the host on how much they want to offer. Gerretsen offered to discuss the technical aspects (online presence, use of alumni data, etc.) of such a program with her colleagues and report back to the Governance Committee.

**E. Recognition of Retiring Board Members**

The following retiring members were recognized: Sophia Kaounas ‘14, Pete Lenz ‘89, Reshma McHale ‘14, Ali Nemecek ‘14, Amanda Schwarzenbart ‘14, and Kevin Warmack ‘79. Susan Meier ‘79 was not in attendance, but also recognized for her role as Alumni Trustee.

**BOARD ACTION:** Adjournment was made at 10:45 a.m. after singing the Alma Mater.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Gerretsen '04

Alumni Board of Directors, Executive Secretary

Director of Alumni Relations